

# TASMANIA'S SUSTAINABLE AGRI-FOOD PLAN 2016-18 UPDATE

Tasmania's Sustainable Agri-Food Plan 2016-18 was released in 2016. The Agri-Food Plan is the Government's system for sustainably growing the agriculture and food sectors in Tasmania, including seafood. It recognises that we can impact Tasmania's capacity to grow, make and protect through focusing on investment, productivity and careers.

Grow. Make. Protect.



This Update highlights progress with ongoing initiatives in the Agri-Food Plan and outlines new initiatives that will help the sustainable growth of the agriculture, seafood and food sectors.

The Government has a target of growing the value of the agricultural sector in Tasmania tenfold to \$10 billion per year by 2050. Access to irrigation, diversity of production, and the State's disease-free status and strong brand supports growth in these sectors. The seafood sector, including aquaculture, also has potential to grow in response to market demand.

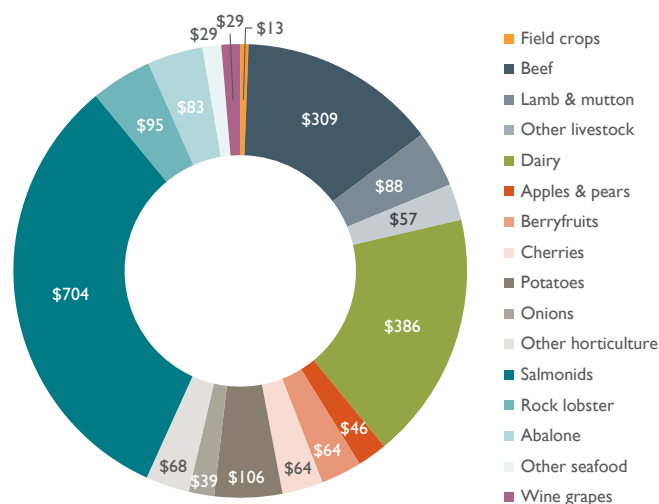
Gross Value of Tasmanian Agricultural Production (includes food and non-food agriculture)



## Updated information on the gross value of food agriculture and seafood

In a year of challenging seasonal conditions and weakness in some important commodity markets, the gross value of Tasmania's agri-food production grew by 8.0% in 2015-16.

Food Farm Gate/Beach Value 2015-16: \$2.18 billion



More information and a copy of the Agri-Food Plan can be found at [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au)

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## Agriculture Policy and Industry Development

Through *Tasmania's Sustainable Agri-Food Plan 2016-18* we are seeking to increase and target investment by Government and the private sector to accelerate growth in Tasmania's agriculture and food sectors.

Improved policy settings reducing red tape have been delivered for farmers through a Good Neighbour Charter; amendments to strengthen the *Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995*, and streamlined crop protection permits for browsing animal management while maintaining access to all control methods. Laws have been passed to support expansion of the industrial hemp industry and to modernise poppy industry regulation to reduce red tape without compromising public safety or Tasmania's international reputation.

Assistance has been provided to industries to manage and respond to challenges including: poppy downy mildew; drought conditions; the dairy price crisis; and the devastating June 2016 floods. In addition, continued support has been provided to rural communities through funding for Rural Alive and Well, Tasmanian Women in Agriculture, the Rural Youth Organisation of Tasmania, Rural Business Tasmania (including increased funding for the Rural Financial Counselling Service) and the Safe Farming Tasmania Program.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Support to King Island	A \$650,000 package secures the King Island Wallaby Officer and Biosecurity Officer roles over the forward estimates. DPIPWE is finalising a plan for the management of fallow deer on King Island based on consultation with the King Island Natural Resource Management Group and other stakeholders.	✓
\$20 million AgriGrowth Loan Scheme - low interest, HECS style loans	As at the end of September 2017, 21 loans totalling over \$10 million approved with more being assessed. Industry sectors so far supported through the Scheme include wine, small fruits, dairy, grazing, protected cropping, nuts, distilleries and agri-tourism operations.	✓
Agricultural Skills Plan - Tasmanian Primary Industries Workforce Development Scan	This \$450,000 partnership with Skills Tasmania and the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) has delivered a <i>Tasmanian Primary Industries Workforce Development Scan</i> ; a careers, skills and training guide to support enterprise level workforce planning; and a pilot program for South-East Tasmania exploring seasonal enterprise labour demands and industry specific Future Leaders Program.	✓
Wool industry - Shearer-hand training	\$310,000 over three years to Primary Employers Tasmania to deliver training. The program in 2016-17 supported 11 formal traineeships, 211 shearers and 148 wool handlers receiving coaching, as well as workshops for students and newcomers to the industry; regular training sessions with contractors, and specialist professional development for trainers.	✓
Capacity building for rural women	Tasmanian Women in Agriculture is implementing a project to connect mainland Tasmanian rural women with women living on King and Flinders Islands.	✓
Workforce support	Seed funding of \$10,000 towards the development and operation of the Tasmanian Agricultural Jobs website <a href="http://www.tasagjobs.com.au">www.tasagjobs.com.au</a>	New
Strategic Industry Partnerships Program	\$1.2 million in the 2017-18 Budget over four years to co-invest with industry peak bodies and organisations in supporting growth and prosperity in our agri-food sectors.	New
Stock Underpass Pilot Program	A \$750,000 Program to off-set the costs associated with establishing stock underpass infrastructure to improve farm and road safety and increase farm efficiency.	New
Pastures and livestock productivity	Working with farmers on practical strategies to improve pasture and livestock productivity to underpin grazing and meat processing sectors.	New

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## Agriculture Policy and Industry Development *continued*

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Crop and Pasture Seed Industry Plan	A Plan to be developed in consultation with farmers and agribusiness to grow Tasmania's place in this potentially high-value market.	New
Charter for Working on Private Farm Land	A Charter to be developed between State Government businesses and the TFGA to enhance relations between farmers and state utilities and landowner's rights.	New
Organic industry development	Development of organic dairy and grain gross margin tools to inform business decisions and a series of business case studies to provide financial and production information on converting to certified organic production.	New
Hemp as food	The Tasmanian Government successfully lobbied to overturn a national ban on the domestic sale of food containing hemp seeds or oil, supporting new opportunities for the State's industrial hemp industry.	New
Bee Industry Futures Report	Funding of \$30,000 to develop a report to guide industry development, pollination services and sustainable access to leatherwood within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.	New
Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme	\$4 million to assist flood-affected landowners and communities through landcare works and services aimed at rehabilitating land and stream systems damaged in the 2016 floods and providing protection for land and water ways from future floods - delivered in partnership with Natural Resource Management groups.	New
Mersey-Dasher Riparian Recovery Program	An additional \$2.15 million in disaster funding from the Australian and State Governments to restore areas of the Mersey-Dasher river system.	New
Rural Alive and Well	Further \$1.7 million over three years to enable Rural Alive and Well to continue its mental health outreach services in rural communities.	New
Safe Farming Tasmania	\$600,000 over four years to provide ongoing support to improve on-farm safety through the On-farm Safety Facilitator.	New

## Water Resources and Irrigation


**Investment in irrigation is supporting growth in Tasmania's food and agricultural sectors.**

**The Tranche Two irrigation Schemes, supported by \$60 million from the Australian Government and \$50 million from the Tasmanian Government together with private sector investment, are well progressed.**

The Southern Highlands, Swan Valley and Duck Irrigation Schemes are under construction. Scottsdale and the North Esk Irrigation Schemes are in the development and approval stage.

A new streamlined dam works approval process has been introduced to support on-farm storage, which has provided a simpler and quicker system for farmers to obtain the necessary approval to complete their dam works.

In 2015-16 irrigation played a key role in mitigating the impact of dry conditions. A new Ministerial Policy, *Water Resource Management During Extreme Dry Conditions*, setting out water resource management measures was implemented, which assisted many farmers during the extreme dry conditions.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Tasmania's Future Irrigation Project	Tasmanian Irrigation's investigation into a potential further eight projects is progressing Macquarie Cressy; Southern Midlands; Detention; Sassafras-Wesley/Vale; Fingal; Flowerdale; Pipers; and Tamar. Tasmanian Irrigation is also investigating the potential to capitalise further on demand and available capacity in other districts, for example Circular Head and the South East.	
Clyde River Water Management Plan	By September 2017, amend the Clyde River Water Management Plan, updating water management arrangements for the community, irrigators and river health.	New

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## Biosecurity

The State Government is strengthening Tasmania's unique island biosecurity status to underpin Tasmania's brand and our agricultural and seafood industries, and food exports. Since Biosecurity Tasmania was formed there has been an increased investment year on year in biosecurity.

The number of dog detector teams has doubled to 12 teams providing a capacity to target 100 per cent of flights at the Launceston and Hobart airports as well as providing a presence at regional airports, ports and mail centres. Modern multi-lingual signage and collection bins have been installed at the TT Line terminal in Devonport and all Tasmanian airports, and refurbishment of the State's biosecurity laboratories is nearing completion.

The introduction of the new strengthened TT Line off-shore biosecurity clearance process over the summer of 2015 has seen significantly more biosecurity risk material being seized off-shore, more targeted vehicle inspections undertaken, and quicker disembarking in Devonport. Over 49 tonnes of biosecurity risk material has been seized since the introduction of the new process in December 2014.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Fruit Fly Strategy	Launched in June 2017, <i>Maintaining Tasmania's freedom from fruit fly: A strategy for the future 2017-2050</i> details a long-term fruit fly strategy with key areas for future action.	✓
Improved biosecurity on the Bass Strait Islands	In cooperation with the King Island and Flinders Island communities, Bass Strait Islands Biosecurity Plans are under development.	✓
Modernising biosecurity legislation	A draft Biosecurity Bill was released for public consultation in June 2017. The Bill is being finalised taking into account input from the consultation process.	✓
Powranna Truckwash	Commence work on the construction of a truck wash at the Rural Services Centre at Powranna.	✓
Biosecurity Frontline Services	\$632,000 over four years to increase the capacity of seasonal Biosecurity Frontline Services to respond to demand during peak times of activity and support the primary industry sector to grow.	New
Livestock Officers	\$235,000 per annum to support new Livestock Officers within DPIPWVE for production animals.	New
Support for RSPCA Inspectorate	Increased funding, to \$550,000 per annum, for the RSPCA Animal Welfare Inspectorate to focus on the welfare of domestic animals.	New
Tasmanian Cat Management Plan	Released in June 2017, the Tasmanian Cat Management Plan 2017-2022 presents the first comprehensive and collaborative approach to managing cats in Tasmania. State Government funding of \$1.44 million is supporting the implementation of the Plan in partnership with Local Government.	New
Improved management of weeds, pests and vertebrate invasive species	\$2 million over four years to continue to improve the management of weeds, vertebrate pests and invasive species and other risks to animal and plant industries.	New

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## Fisheries and Aquaculture

**Sustainable management and protection of the value of Tasmania's world class fisheries, marine farming and seafood sector continues to be a priority.**

The day-to-day environmental regulation of the salmon industry moved to the independent Environment Protection Authority in July 2016. In addition, legislation has been passed re-introducing demerit points and introducing significantly tougher penalties for breaches of licence conditions.

The existing commitments to the rock lobster translocation program and Fisheries Integrated Licensing and Management System (FILMS) continue to be implemented. The policy for advancing developmental fisheries has seen permits issued for developmental

fishing for Australian sardines, octopus and marine plants.

\$10.4 million has been allocated over four years to the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies to continue its internationally leading fisheries, marine farming and marine environment research and teaching. The Fish Health Centre of Excellence at Mt Pleasant has been expanded with the integration of fish health diagnostic services with fish disease research, to create the Aquatic Animal Health and Vaccines Centre of Excellence.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Tasmanian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program	An additional \$200,000 per annum on an ongoing basis has been allocated to continue to support the Tasmanian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program. This is in addition to the \$100,000 provided in 2016-17 which is ongoing.	✓
Marine Plant Fishery Management Plan	A Marine Plant Fishery Management Plan has been released.	✓
Wild Harvest Bivalve Shell Fishery Management Plan	The new Fisheries (Shellfish) Rules 2017 took effect on 21 March 2017 to improve the management of the Tasmanian inshore shellfish fishery.	✓
Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) package - fee relief	The provision of fee/levy relief to oyster marine farmers was extended for the 2016-17 financial year.	✓
POMS package - POMS Recovery Concessional Loan Scheme	Extension of the Department of State Growth administered POMS Recovery Concessional Loan Scheme until 1 May 2018.	✓
World class regulation of our salmon industry	Draft Salmonid Industry Sustainable Growth Plan released for public comment on 10 August 2017. Continued regulatory improvements of the industry through the introduction to Parliament of the Salmonid Aquaculture Environmental Regulation Reform Bill 2017.	✓
Renewal of Tasmanian Seafood Pledge	Making over \$2 million available to support essential training for the growing seafood sector for up to another three years in partnership with the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council and Seafood Training Tasmania.	New
Support to the oyster industry	\$765,000 to extend the support to the oyster industry over three years to implement the biosecurity and recovery measures in response to POMS.	New
Aquatic animal health	\$600,000 to maintain the core capacity of the Centre of Excellence for Aquatic Animal Health.	New
Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing (TARFish)	One-year funding of \$146,000 to support the operations of TARFish while a sustainable long-term funding arrangement is negotiated that enables the organisation to deliver improved services for recreational fishers.	New
Biotoxin Testing Laboratory	\$1.21 million to establish a biotoxin testing laboratory in Tasmania servicing shellfish growers and the broader seafood industry to uphold seafood safety and product integrity.	New

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## Investment Attraction, Infrastructure, Skills and Brand Support

Trade missions to support investment and the sale of Tasmanian produce continue. This includes the successful trade mission to Korea and Japan in February 2017, which was followed by the State hosting seven of Japan's up and coming chefs in Tasmania from 29 March to 2 April 2017.


Infrastructure Tasmania has developed and released the *Tasmanian Integrated Freight Strategy* to support productivity through delivering an integrated freight system.

The Tourism Tasmania Access 2020 Strategy released in October 2015 is a five-year air and sea access strategy. Its aim is to provide sustainable air and sea services for passengers and freight in order to meet the state's goals of attracting 1.5 million visitors annually to Tasmania by 2020 and supporting the target to increase the growth in agriculture.

The \$1.25 million Wood and Fibre Processing Innovation Program launched in July 2016 supports projects that demonstrate

innovative ways of utilising plant residues from forestry and agriculture to create value-added products. This includes \$550 000 for projects to develop biofuel opportunities. Private Forests Tasmania and the TFGA are collaborating on a \$450 000 initiative to encourage adoption of farm forestry and grower initiatives.

The Department of State Growth continues to support primary industries through trade and investment and small business support programs. The Brand Tasmania - Food and Beverage Tasmania website also supports industry to connect with potential trade partners and customers.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Supporting a skilled workforce	Through <i>Investing in Skills for Growth</i> , the Tasmanian Government is invigorating the Tasmanian training and workforce development system to engage strategically with industry to deliver real skills for Tasmanian workplaces.	
New Market Expansion Program	Ten Tasmanian food and agribusinesses, and respective industry groups and associations, received funding in 2016-17 to support their development activities in priority markets both nationally and internationally. Activities included supporting participation in Asia's leading food and hospitality tradeshow "HOFEX", Asia Fruit Logistica, in-store promotions across Hong Kong, government-led trade missions to South and East Asia, website development and social media campaigns, and attendance at local trade shows in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.	New
King Island Shipping	TasPorts subsidiary, Bass Island Line, is operating a regular service to King Island. Infrastructure Tasmania reviewing the options/possibilities for a purpose built vessel for the King Island service.	New
Agri-Tourism Strategy	An Agri-Tourism Strategy is being developed.	New
Inaugural Farmgate Festival	The inaugural 2017 Farmgate Festival, supported by Events Tasmania's Regional Events Start-up Program, will provide visitors and locals a behind the scenes look at farms and beverage businesses across the Tamar Valley.	New
Brand Project	Funding of \$500 000 has been allocated in 2017-18 to continue a focused and differentiated approach to marketing Tasmania. This will build on work undertaken in 2016-17 to ensure the Tasmanian Brand is nationally and internationally competitive and leveraged to drive economic growth in the State – including in agriculture and aquaculture.	New



## Agricultural Education

The Primary Schools to Primary Industries initiative has brought together a range of education and training providers to gain a more comprehensive view of education and training provision.

The *Grow, Make, Protect: Tasmanian Agricultural Education Framework* embeds agriculture in the curriculum. Students have a clear education pathway that develops a deep understanding of primary industries and the science behind food and fibre production.

Within the Department of Education in 2016–17 a Senior Project Officer Food and Fibre was employed to develop a range of agricultural education teacher resources (food and fibre production) for Prep to Year 10 students. Improved Food and Fibre Production programs in schools and career pathways will provide tangible support to primary industries.

The *Framework* is in addition to the Tasmanian Government's establishment of the Hagley Farm School Centre for Agricultural Education in 2015, the Lead Teacher of Agricultural Education based at the Centre, and the establishment of the Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network.

Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Primary School to Primary Industries – supporting curriculum, higher education and program delivery to promote careers in primary industries	\$300,000 over two years to support implementation of the <i>Tasmanian Agricultural Education Framework</i> , through building the capacity of departmental school staff to develop and promote sustainable agricultural education experiences and opportunities linked to the Australian curriculum, and lead and coordinate the development of contemporary learning materials and resources and professional learning to support the Primary Schools to Primary Industries initiative.	✓
Agricultural Education	Developing Agricultural Education teacher resources (Food and Fibre Production) for government Prep to Year 10 students.	New
Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network	\$15,000 provided to the Network to host the National Association of Agricultural Educators National Conference in Launceston in January 2018.	New



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## Agricultural Research, Development and Extension

**\$20 million over four years to the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) to continue its world class cool-climate agricultural research, development, extension and education that is vital for growing Tasmanian agriculture's productivity and developing future technologies and opportunities for our farmers.**



Initiative	Update/ Description	Status
Water for Profit – making the most from irrigation	Through the \$1.5 million Water for Profit program 54 farm businesses are participating in peer to peer learning groups focused on irrigation efficiency, technology and planning.	✓
Poppy downy mildew research	An Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project investigating the epidemiology of poppy downy mildew. The project is funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Governments, the poppy industry and UTAS.	✓
Improving the Productivity of Tasmanian Vineyards Project	Since July 2016, this \$570,000 joint Project with Wine Tasmania and TIA has been working to improve vine productivity in line with optimal quality. The Project is collaborating with 13 vineyards across six wine growing areas of Tasmania.	✓
On-farm productivity – Vegetable Productivity Biofumigation Project	With \$150,000 in state funding, this collaborative Project with the vegetable industry and TIA, is investigating the benefits of using brassica cover crops to manage disease, pests and weeds in annual vegetable crops.	✓
On-farm productivity – Precision Agriculture Project	A \$530,000 collaborative Project between TIA, the Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group and other stakeholders, showcasing precision agriculture technologies to farmers, including through an annual expo.	✓
White Paper; "Growing Tasmanian Agriculture – Research, Development and Extension for 2050"	The White Paper will guide future Government investment and industry partnerships, and set a contemporary research, development and extension framework for achieving the productivity improvements required to grow the value of agriculture tenfold to \$10 billion by 2050.	New
Improving processing vegetable yields through improved production practices	A \$235,000 TIA managed Project aiming to ensure the future viability of Tasmania's vegetable processing industry by increasing yields of key crops and decreasing input costs.	New

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